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The situation in the Middle East

The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 12 November 2001 from the Permanent Representatives of China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the statement issued after the meeting of our Ministers for Foreign Affairs on 12 November 2001 (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 42, 43 and 166, and of the Security Council.

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Permanent Representative of China
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Jean-David **Levitte**
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(*Signed*) Sergey V. **Lavrov**
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(*Signed*) Jeremy **Greenstock**
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(*Signed*) John D. **Negroponte**
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Annex to the letter dated 12 November 2001 from the Permanent Representatives of China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement issued on 12 November 2001 after the meeting between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the five permanent members of the Security Council and the Secretary-General

On 12 November 2001, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the five permanent members of the Security Council, Tang Jiaxuan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Hubert Védrine, Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, Igor Ivanov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Jack Straw, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Colin Powell, Secretary of State of the United States of America, met with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan.

The Ministers were delighted that the Secretary-General and the United Nations had been honoured with this year's Nobel Peace Prize and expressed their warmest congratulations to the Secretary-General. They looked forward to his second term and promised to assist him in addressing the challenges that lay ahead. The award of the Nobel Peace Prize underlines the vital role which the United Nations plays in today's world and the need to enhance further the efficiency and effectiveness of the Organization, including in the area of peacekeeping.

In that regard, the Ministers attached great significance to the effective implementation of the Millennium Declaration and recognized that much remained to be done. They drew attention to the continuing importance of maintaining Africa's peace, stability and development and agreed that adequate resources and energies from the international community would continue to be required to that end.

The Ministers met in the aftermath of the tragic events of 11 September. They reaffirmed that acts of international terrorism constitute a very serious threat to international peace and security in the twenty-first century. In that context they reviewed and commended the response of the General Assembly and the Security Council, which had adopted resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001) in a swift, unanimous and substantive way, to those events. They reiterated the call on all States to take urgent steps to implement fully resolution 1373 (2001) and to assist each other in doing so. They underlined the obligation on all States to deny financial and all other forms of support and safe haven to terrorists and those supporting terrorism. They noted with satisfaction the current progress in implementing Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), including through the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the Security Council, which has already offered guidance to States for the submission of reports on its implementation. They agreed to continue to play a full part in the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and were ready to make joint efforts with other Member States of the United Nations to strengthen the global consensus against terrorism in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. They stressed the need to strengthen the international legal regime for combating terrorism and strongly advocated, in this

regard, the speedy adoption by the General Assembly of the outstanding conventions.

The Ministers discussed Afghanistan and condemned the Taliban's continued support for international terrorist organizations and terrorist threats emanating from Afghanistan. They agreed that the United Nations must continue to play its central role in international efforts towards a resolution of the Afghan conflict and should continue to take the lead in assisting Afghans in the formation of a broad-based, multiethnic government that is fully representative of the Afghan people to replace the Taliban regime. This government would respect human rights and regional stability. It should also meet Afghanistan's international obligations, including cooperation with international efforts to combat terrorism and the suppression of trade in narcotics. The Ministers agreed to support international efforts to rebuild Afghanistan and promised to devote the necessary resources to complete this important task. They expressed their full support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and of his special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi.

The Ministers expressed their deep concern at recent tragic events in the Middle East. They strongly encouraged Israelis and Palestinians to take the necessary security, economic and political steps to move from confrontation to the resumption of a political process. The Ministers reiterated their condemnation of acts of terror and violence and their conviction that the only solution to the Israeli-Palestinian problem is through dialogue and negotiations. They called on Israel to withdraw from all areas into which it has made incursions and to ensure greater restraint by the Israeli defence forces. They also called on the Palestinian Authority to take all possible steps to put an end to violence. In this regard, they urged the parties to implement the Tenet plan and the recommendations of the Mitchell report, which the parties have accepted, as quickly as possible. The Ministers called on the parties to create an environment in which negotiations based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the Madrid principles could resume.

Finally, the Ministers noted with satisfaction that the intensified cooperation between the five permanent members of the Security Council, which they had agreed to initiate at their meeting on 13 September 2000, in accordance with the Declaration of their Heads of State and Government of 7 September 2000, had borne fruit on a range of issues in New York and elsewhere. They continued to believe that such cooperation was in the interests of the Security Council and the international community as a whole.